



**The Use of Symbolism in The Music Video *Permission to Dance* By
BTS**

(A Semiotic Analysis)

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS



By:

ISMAHANI

NIM: 3320001

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

FACULTY OF BUSINESS, LANGUAGES, AND EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF PESANTREN TINGGI DARUL 'ULUM JOMBANG

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

This study focuses on Semiotics which analyzes the use of symbols. According to Saussure (2002), signs are related to linguistics where signs and meanings as a system for conveying and expressing ideas and notions. With this linguistic study background, signs are used as a medium of communication to the public about literary works that have been created with the use of symbols or signs contained therein. In semiotics, signs and meanings are interconnected with a social life that will be conveyed by poets to the public through symbols or signs. This study uses Perrine's symbol theory (2002), the theory which focuses on symbolism studies because the semiotics contained in Ferdinand de Saussure's theory also explain the sign or symbol.

Furthermore, according to Perinne (2002), the symbol has more meaning than what it is symbolized. It does not correlate what is depicted and what is meant, but a symbol has a meaning relationship with a correlation that has an agreement between them. Symbol involves the use of words, images, or objects that have a specific meaning in the context of a story or poem. In the context of art and literature, symbols have deep and often hidden meanings to convey deeper and more emotional messages. Symbol allows writers to convey deeper and more complex messages, themes, or emotions, often by using creative language and metaphors.

The statement of Perrine (2002) about symbolism is supported by Quinn (2006) that he explained Symbolism which is included in semiotics, where it is a style or movement in art, literature, and culture. Quinn (2006) also states that symbolism is the practice of using symbols or can be called the practice of describing a group of symbols in a particular text. Based on this statement, it



can be stated that symbolism has a different meaning from what is symbolized and in using symbolism the poet gives messages indirectly through symbols contained in his work. Symbolism uses symbols and images to convey an idea or meaning in a literary work. Poets convey feelings, thoughts, or ideas in their work not directly but through symbols and images. This use of symbol can be used anywhere, especially in literary works such as songs, poems, novels, movies, and music.

According to Lubis (2019), music is a behavior or a way for a poet to write the journey of his life, or the feelings of the poet through his music. Through the music, the poet expresses what they feel to the audience. Therefore, by conveying the expression of the poet, the audience can find out the meaning of the music created. Similarly, the meaning contained in some of the songs are literary creations that come from the description of the poet expressions. Since music contains meaning and symbol and the meaning is the expression of the creator or the poet, music can be categorized as literary art. The audience of the music can enjoy the expression of the poet manifested in the song. One of the music that is analyzed in this research is BTS music video.

BTS has been discussed by Priherdityo (2021) that BTS (Bulletproof Boy Scouts) is a boy band from South Korea who started their career in 2013 under the auspices of BigHit Entertainment. This boyband consists of 7 men, Kim Seokjin (Jin), Min Yoongi (Suga), Jung Hoseok (J-Hope), Kim Namjoon (Rap Monster), Park Jimin (Jimin), Kim Taehyung (V), and Jeon Jungkook (JK) are among the group of cast members. They debuted in South Korea with their first album, "Dark & Wild" in 2014 and their latest album at the moment is "Proof" which was released in 2022. This boy band has won many awards and has received several nominations, both domestically and abroad. They are a boy band from South Korea who have won many awards and have received many awards, one of which is that they have won 12 times at the Billboard Music Awards. Several of BTS's songs reflect their life journey, and motivation to love themselves and represent the life they have. around at the moment.

Among the music videos created by BTS, this study uses BTS's *Permission to Dance* music video as the object. The *Permission to Dance* music video was released on July 9, 2021 on Hybe Labels' YouTube account and has been viewed 611 times on the YouTube account. BTS songs are very popular in all circles, as recorded in the Spotify application there are 36 million listeners and the Hybe Labels YouTube account has 73 thousand subscribers. This music video also won awards abroad such as the No. 1 Hot 100 position and the first place in Digital Song Sales at the Billboard Music Award in 2021. The music video also received other nominations such as Challenge Hits (2021), Song of The Year (2022), and Best 5 Song (2022). Another interesting reason is that they made the music video of this song during the pandemic that occurred in 2020, The statement of Namira (2021) the music video of this song presents hope about the state of the world when the pandemic has ended in the future. This music video also has the meaning of freedom of expression, unity, happiness, rejection of limitations, and overcoming obstacles with each other, which are still related during the pandemic. Based on this meaning, they provide positive motivation to their fans through the songs in this music video by overcoming these obstacles with each other. In the music video, they also use a lot of symbols, because they convey the song using beautiful song lyrics and also the symbols used in making the music video for the song *Permission to Dance*. By using these symbols, the audience does not know the meaning of each symbol in the song. The use of these symbols is what keeps many people from knowing the meaning of BTS songs, so this study will focus on semiotics which means the science of signs and studying the meaning of the signs used.

This study applied a semiotic approach since the data to be analyzed begins with understanding the meaning of the symbols contained in the *Permission to Dance* music video by BTS on YouTube. Each symbol must have a meaning contained in it and analysis must be carried out to understand the meaning of the symbol in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video so that the language contained in the song is conveyed to the listener. From this explanation, the study will examine the use of symbolism in the music video



from BTS, namely *Permission to Dance*, to find out the meaning of the symbols used in the music video. Here study conducted research with the title "Semiotic Analysis: The Use of Symbolism in the Music Video "*Permission to Dance* – BTS".

The method to analyze this study is by finding the use of markers and foreshadowing in the music video that will be analyzed. For example, in the music video from BTS with the title *Permission to Dance*. The symbolic object is the Flamingo. The flamingo in the *Permission to Dance* music video, there is a flamingo bird at the 3:26 - 3:27 moment. In this scene there is a statue of a flamingo bird and several members who dance among the flamingos, they are Jimin and Taehyung. They dance happily and are surrounded by the flamingos.

Oni (2021) explains that the flamingo bird symbolizes resurrection and transformation. The resurrection and transformation related to the symbolism in this music video is BTS assuring that after this pandemic is over, there will be change and growth afterward. Then, the meaning of awakening refers to the term rising from a bad situation to a better situation. This means that after the pandemic ends, we must rise again to be better. Meanwhile, transformation relates to changes after the pandemic ends.

Flamingo also symbolizes hope, recovery, and development, still by Joseph Oni explains. This meaning relates to the music video for *Permission to Dance*, in which they hope that the pandemic will end soon and recover or change for the better after everything is over.

Hence this study discuss a semiotic study that focuses on the use of symbols according to Perrine's theory (2002). This theory will analyze each symbol contained in the music video such as symbolic name, symbolic object, symbolic action, and symbolic setting. Symbols, according to Perrine, can be objects, people, situations, actions, or other things with literal meaning (2002). This study using this theory will analyze the meaning of the use of symbols,



where symbols are divided into several types of symbols. Symbols not only have meaning but also have types.

There are previous studies that have used the object *Permission to Dance* by BTS, but using different topics. The topic studied is not only from a literature aspect but also from a linguistics aspect. The first is Hakim and Aina (2022). Their title is "Analisis Semiotika Video Klip "*Permission to Dance*". They use the theory of Barthes about sign, signifier, signified, denotation meaning, and connotation meaning. The research method applied in this research is the qualitative description method. The form of the data in this research analyzes body movements, expressions, and objects. The second research was conducted by Mersita (2022) with the title "Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce Pada Music Video *Permission to Dance* Oleh BTS" using Peirce's theory. She uses the theory of Peirce about signs, objects, and interpretants. The research method used in this study is a qualitative method. The form of the data in this study analyzes logos, symbols, and gestures. While Kinanti (2022) connected this song to the Pandemic representation with the title "Representasi Pandemi Covid 19 Dalam Video Klip Lagu *Permission to Dance* Oleh BTS" using Barthes's theory (2009) about sign, myth, signifier, signified, denotation meaning, and connotation meaning. The research method used in this research is a qualitative description method. The data used are gestures, expressions, and objects. The fourth research was conducted by Kristiawati and Sutopo (2023) with the title "A Semantic Analysis in The Lyrics of Bangtan Sonyeondan's Songs" using Ullman's theory (2009) about metaphor. This research used a qualitative descriptive approach method. The data form of this research analyzes words and sentences. The fifth research was conducted by Agustina and Mustikawati (2023) with the title "Analysis of Figurative Language in Song Lyrics "*Make It Right*" and "*Permission to Dance*" By BTS" using the theory of Knickerbocker and Renninger (1963) and Griffiths (2006). They use theory about metaphor, hyperbole, alliteration, irony, personification, simile, symbolism, metonymy, and synecdoche. The research method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method. The data form



in this study analyzes words and sentences. Those previous studies commonly used the theories of Barthes, Peirce, Ullman, Knickerbocker, Renninger (1963), and Griffiths (2006). Therefore, the method used is qualitative description method.

The differences between this study and the previous studies are in the theories and methods. This study examines the symbols or signs contained in the music video or video clip *Permission to Dance* which uses the theory of Perrine (2002). Some of the research above may have similarities in the theory and data sources used, but this theory has never been used to analyze the *Permission to Dance* music video specifically analyzing the symbols or signs in this music video.

1.2 Statements of The Problem

This study will analyze the use of symbols in the music video *Permission to Dance*. This study will attempt offering answers to the following problem questions:

1. What types of symbols are found in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video according to Perrine's theory?
2. How do those symbols create the meaning of *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video?

1.3 Objective of the study

Based on the statements of the problem, this study would like to:

1. To identify the types of symbols found in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video.
2. To analyze the contextual meaning of the symbol found in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video.



1.4 Significance of the study

1. Theoretical Significance

This research is a component of literary studies, specifically within the field of semiotics. It delves into the examination of the meaning behind symbols or signs. This research can serve as a valuable resource and reference for related studies in the realm of semiotics. The intention is that this research will offer an illustrative example of an inquiry centered on semiotic analysis. The focus of this study will be the analysis of a music video by members of the South Korean boy band, BTS, titled "*Permission to Dance*." Additionally, it is anticipated that this research will serve as a guide for those interested in exploring semiotics with precision, particularly in the context of symbolism.

2. Practical Significance

This study provides knowledge and understanding of semiotic studies that focus on the use of symbols. Hopefully, this study will give significance to the reader's understanding of research in semiotic study. This music video is not just to be seen or heard, but in this music video some meanings can be analyzed in every symbol they use. The purpose of this research is also to increase students' understanding, identify messages, and help in relating the use of symbols to several existing contexts such as cultural and historical contexts. They create artworks that are always by the realization or reality of life around them that can motivate the people who enjoy their artworks.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is Semiotic, which has been stated in the title of this research which is "Semiotics Analysis: The Use of Symbolism in The Music Video "*Permission to Dance* - BTS". This study focuses on semiotic studies on the music video entitled *Permission to Dance*. In the *Permission to Dance* music video. This study provides knowledge and understanding of



semiotic studies that focus on the use of symbols in the music video entitled *Permission to Dance*. This study focuses on symbol analysis that uses Perrine's theory (2002). In Perrine's theory (2002) types of symbols consist of analyzing symbolic objects, symbolic names, symbolic actions, and symbolic settings.

The limitations of this study are symbol analysis using Perrine's theory (2002) on a music video entitled *Permission to Dance*. This study only analyzes symbols including symbolic names, symbolic objects, symbolic actions, and symbolic settings.

1.6 Research Method

The method used in this study is the semiotics analysis approach. This study adopts Culler's (1978) concept in its methodology, which involves identifying symbols within a literary work. The focus is on deciphering the meanings associated with these symbols. The use of these methods can be used as useful tools in the analysis process because these methods can help a writer find data and analyze the results of the data. This research method contains research design, data and data sources, data collection techniques, and data analysis techniques.

1.6.1 Research Design

This study uses a semiotic analysis approach adopts Culler's (1978) concept. According to Culler (1978), Semiotic analysis is a method used to analyze and hunt for signs or symbols that carry meaning. This study uses the semiotic approach method to analyze semiotics which focuses on collecting data about the symbols contained in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video. This study is trying to understand people's perceptions about the use of symbols in a literary work, especially the use of symbols in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video.

1.6.2 Data and Source of The Data

The data of this study are in the form of objects, actions, and settings obtained from the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video.



Those data are analyzed in terms of the meaning and the symbols based on Perrine's theory (2002).

The source of data is the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video from a popular boy band in South Korea and around the world, BTS. The seven members of BTS are Kim Namjoon (RM), Min Yoongi (Suga), Jung Hoseok (J-Hope), Park Jimin (Jimin), Kim Seokjin (Jin), Kim Taehyung (V), and Jeon Jungkook (JK). This music video was released on July 9, 2021 on the Hybe Labels YouTube account. At the beginning of the release of this music video, it received millions of views in a short time until now the audience for this music video has recorded 611 views. The *Permission to Dance* music video also received many positive reactions from the audience. This music video was directed by Collin Tilley, who is a famous music video director and he worked with many famous meanings such as Cardi B, Justin Bieber, Chris Brown, and others. In the production of this song, BTS worked with famous composers Ed Sheeran, Steve Mac, and Johnny McDaid. The music video is very popular as it portrays a positive spirit and encourages everyone to celebrate life and freedom.

1.6.3 Steps Collecting Data

Here are the steps in finding data:

1. Downloading *Permission to Dance* music video.
2. Watching and understanding the *Permission to Dance* music video.
3. Selecting of objects, actions, and settings obtained from the *Permission to Dance* by BTS music video based on the symbol by Perrine's theory (2002).
4. Recording important information, specifically the symbols that have been found in the *Permission to Dance* Music Video.



5. Listing symbolic names, symbolic objects, symbolic actions, and symbolic settings by Perrine's theory (2002).

6. Tabulating the data that has been found.

7. Code of Data:

Example : 1/PTD/SO/05:30-05:34.

1 : Number of datum

PTD : *Permission to Dance*

SO : Symbolic Objects

05: 30 – 05:34 : Duration the part in video music

1.6.4 Technique of Data Analysis

To analyze the data, the steps are:

1. Identifying types of symbols according to Perrine's theory found in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS Music video.
2. Explaining the meaning of each symbol that has been found in the *Permission to Dance* by BTS Music video.
3. Deriving conclusions from the analysis obtained.

1.7 Definition of the key terms

1. Literature : One of the literary arts is nonverbal or verbal, whereas in literature there are ideas, stories, and emotions from poets conveyed through their literary works in a beautiful and unique style. According to Cuddon (2016). in A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, literature can be in the types of drama, lyrics, novels, short stories, and ode, which in a literary work has advantages in terms of aesthetic and artistic value
2. Semiotics : The study of signs and symbols used as a means of communication or conveying meaning through these symbols or signs.



According to Ferdinand (1981), signs are related to linguistics where signs and meanings as a system for conveying and expressing ideas and notions.

3. Symbolism: A style in art, literature, and culture that uses symbols or images to convey an abstract meaning in a work of art. According to Quinn (2006), a Symbol is a term often used in literature that makes a person, place, object, or event represent an abstract idea or condition.
4. Symbol: One of the symbolisms in the form of images, words, objects, or signs that have meaning in the symbol. According to Perinne's theory (2002), Symbols in literature have a literal meaning in a story but the symbol implies or represents another meaning. In literature, symbols have more meaning than what is symbolized.

1.8 Organization of the study

This study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, research methodology that includes the research design, data and source of the data, steps of collecting data, and techniques of data analysis, definition of key terms, and organization of the study.

In the second chapter, there is an explanation of the theoretical and conceptual foundations. This chapter explains the theories used in analyzing this research topic and also explains previous research. The theories used include semiotics, symbolism, and Perrine's theory of symbols contained in the *Permission to Dance* music video.

In the third chapter, we will analyze the topic contained in this research. Then the fourth chapter consists of a closing and suggestion which is used as the end of this research.

